



Self-Advocacy

What is self-advocacy?

The National Deaf Center on Postsecondary Outcomes defines self-advocacy as “the ability to articulate one’s needs and make informed decisions about the support necessary to meet those needs.” The National Deaf Center reports that for people who are deaf or hard of hearing, an increase in self-advocacy skills “contribute to an increased quality of life, sense of agency and overall well-being” Self-advocacy is learned throughout the lifetime, it is never too early to start practicing these important skills.

Examples of self-advocacy skills

Elementary School: Is able to report when their personal devices are not working

Middle School: Describe their own hearing levels; awareness of who and how to ask for help

High School: Identifies and explains support needs; contributes to own IEP goals and supports

Interested in learning more about advocacy skill development? See the [Success for Kids website](#) and the [Guide to Self-Advocacy Skill Development](#)

Did you know?

Practice Is Key...

At Home

- Talk about hearing loss at home
- Positivity surrounding any devices if applicable
- Include your child in the process
- Reduce background noise at home and talk about why
- Role play scenarios at home

Books

are a great resource
for self-advocacy.

Check out [these amazing books](#) featuring characters who are deaf or hard of hearing.

With Role Models

The National Deaf Center reports that deaf role models matter. “They offer support from a place of shared understanding and life experiences.” Role models can serve as aspirational goals for your child/student.

Connect: Virtually - [Online Resources from NDC](#)
In-Person—[Indiana Hands & Voices](#) offers family events regularly

At School

- Have your student practice discussing their hearing loss and what it means to them
- Establish safe signals to use with your student to grow confidence with asking for help (touch your nose if you didn’t hear me)
- Consider frontloading language-heavy coursework at the beginning of the day
- Discuss signs of listening fatigue and things to look for with your students
- Listen to and respect your student and their experience



Find out more

Self-advocacy activities

- [Apps](#)
- [Board Games](#)
- [Jeopardy Board](#)
- [Baamboozle Game For grades 1-3](#)
- [DeafVerse For Deaf teens](#)

Video Libraries

- [#DeafSuccess Video Library](#)
- [Stories from Deaf Students](#)

Self-advocacy checklists

- [E-BOOK](#)
- [Track Self-advocacy skill development](#)
- [Track social skill development](#)
- [Student Expectations for Advocacy & Monitoring \(SEAM\)](#)

Toys

- [Barbie with hearing aids](#)
- [Hearing aid stickers](#)
- [3D printed hearing aids for stuffed animals](#)

